



*Stephanie Rawlings-Blake*  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman*



*Thomas J. Stosur*  
Director

## STAFF REPORT

**July 10, 2014**

**REQUEST:** Street Closing/Closing of Portion of Several Streets and Alleys/Block 1102 for Great Blacks in Wax

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**STAFF:** Alexandra Hoffman

**COMPREHENSIVE PLANNER:** Kate Edwards

**PETITIONER:** The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum

**OWNER(S):** Mayor and City Council

### **SITE AREA**

Site Conditions: The Subject Property includes portions of several streets and alleys within Block 1102 which is bounded by E. North Avenue to the north, N. Broadway Street to the East, E. Lafayette Avenue to the south and N. Bond Street to the west. The specific streets and alleys to be closed are a portion of N. Bethel Street, a portion of Eareckson Place, a portion of a 15 foot alley, a portion of a 10 foot 3 inch alley, a 3 foot alley, and a walkway with access to E. North Avenue as indicated on the attached block plat (Exhibit 1).

General Conditions: The Subject Property is located in the Oliver neighborhood, just east of the Greenmount Cemetery and southeast of the Eastside District Courthouse. The existing National Great Blacks in Wax Museum is located within Block 1102 at the southeast corner of E. North Avenue and N. Bond Street.

### **ANALYSIS**

This proposed street and alley closings would impact several Rights-of-Way within Block 1102. The Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development has been actively acquiring and demolishing the properties fronting the proposed Rights-of-Way to close. The approval of the proposed street and alley closings will facilitate further consolidation of the redevelopment site in the interior of Block 1102 as indicated on the attached block plat (Exhibit 1).

A Utility Investigation is currently being conducted and the existence of utilities within the Rights-of-Way proposed to be closed may impact future development.

It is staff's finding that the Rights-of-Way included in the Subject Property are not needed to provide access to adjacent properties since all the properties are to be acquired by the Mayor and City Council. Thus the Subject Property is no longer needed for a public purpose and can be closed, the Rights-of-Way declared surplus property and sold along with the adjacent parcels.

The Petitioner, The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, plans to purchase the resultant redevelopment parcel in the interior of Block 1102 to expand their existing museum, which is currently located adjacent to the redevelopment site at 1601-3 E. North Avenue.

### **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

Comprehensive Master Plan: This proposed street and alley closing is compatible with the Comprehensive Master Plan for Baltimore City, specifically:

#### **LIVE**

Goal 1: Build Human and Social Capital by Strengthening Neighborhoods

*Objective 2:* Strategically Redevelop Vacant Properties throughout the City

#### **PLAY**

Goal 1: Enhance the Enjoyment, Appreciation, and Stewardship of Baltimore's Historical and Cultural Resources

Oliver Urban Renewal Plan: The Subject Property is located within the Oliver Urban Renewal Plan which does not further restrict the proposed use.

### **COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION**

The East North Avenue Community Development Corporation and the Oliver Community Association have been notified of the requested action.



**Thomas J. Stosur**  
**Director**

**Exhibit 1:** Block 1102 Plat

